

USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

# GAIN Report

Global Agricultural Information Network

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### **The WASABI - Hot News from Japan Vol. 10 Issue 8**

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**Report Highlights:**

Ambassador Kennedy Visits the Kikkoman Museum and Imperial Soy Sauce Brewery; High Oleic Soy Oil Debuts in Japan; The U.S. Embassy's Agriculture Team visits one of the Largest U.S. Corn Customers in the World; U.S. Pavilion at Kuze Tradeshow Highlights U.S. Foods; American BBQ TV Filming Event; ATO Osaka participated in American Day 2014

# The Wasabi

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## **Ambassador Kennedy Visits Kikkoman's Museum and Imperial Soy Sauce Brewery:**

On September 22, U.S. Ambassador to Japan, Caroline Kennedy, visited the Kikkoman Company's main production facility outside of Tokyo. During her visit, Ambassador Kennedy met and thanked Kikkoman's President and CEO, Mr. Yuzaburo Mogi, for his company's long history of support of U.S. farmers and agricultural products, as well as bilateral educational exchanges. Ambassador Kennedy then toured the Kikkoman museum where she learned about the methods of brewing soy sauce. Ambassador Kennedy also visited the special soy sauce brewery for the Imperial Japanese family which continues to use the same production methods as 350 years ago when Kikkoman was founded. Kikkoman, along with other Japanese food processors,

are important customers of U.S. soybeans, making Japan the third largest market for U.S. oilseeds with over one billion dollars' worth of imports in 2013.

**High Oleic Soy Oil Debuts in Japan:** On September 10, a team from the U.S. Embassy's Office of Agricultural Affairs (OAA) visited DuPont Japan's research facility in Utsunomiya City, Tochigi Prefecture to learn about the company's high oleic soybean and their public outreach efforts to promote greater understanding of agricultural biotechnology and its derived products. At a test plot on the facility compound, DuPont is growing several varieties of and soybeans, from original wild cultivars to conventional biotech varieties, so visitors can observe the effects of traditional and modern biotechnology crop breeding technologies. At a nearby community center, the staff had a chance to sample shrimp and vegetable tempura fried in high oleic soy oil and the team with impressed by the oil's aroma and taste. DuPont Japan's Senior Manager for Biotechnology and Regulatory Affairs told the team that the company was able to establish good relationships with local stakeholders, including farmers, through sustained educational efforts. In fact, DuPont has been so successful that local farmers have begun requesting a wide and varied wish list of genetically engineered varieties to resolve various challenges they are facing on their farms. DuPont is currently working to build the Japanese food service sector's demand for high oleic soy oil to create demand for high oleic soy beans among the Japanese oil crushing industry.



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**The U.S. Embassy's Agriculture Team Visits One of the Largest U.S. Corn Customers in the World:** On August 19, the U.S. Embassy's Minister Counselor for Agricultural Affairs David Miller and Agricultural Specialist Yuichi Hayashi visited a Japan Corn Starch (JCS) factory in Aichi Prefecture. JCS imports 700,000 metric tons (MT) of corn annually, mainly from the United States and owns a 30,000 MT storage facility and contracts another 80,000 MT of storage from a nearby company. During the visit, the team was able to observe



the Dracon Ocean, a bulk freighter from the United States, as it unloaded a shipment of corn.

JCS produces corn starch, byproducts and sweeteners including corn syrup, High Fructose Corn Syrup (HFCS), and glucose at their state-of-the-art Kinu-ura factory. Corn starch is used in various food and non-food items such as beer, paper, corrugated cardboard, surimi (fish paste), confectionaries and so on. JCS expressed interest in the latest wet milling technologies as they are planning to expand their production of corn starch and HFCS. The company is also seeking sources of non-GM corn to produce corn starch for beer production.

**U.S. Pavilion at Kuze Tradeshow Highlights U.S. Foods:** On September 9 and 10, Agricultural Trade Office (ATO) Tokyo teamed up with 11 U.S. cooperators and Japanese importers to hold the U.S. food pavilion at the Kuze tradeshow, which targeted the Hotel, Restaurant and Institutions (HRI) sector. Kuze is a major food service wholesaler with over 600 employees and \$650 million in revenue in 2013. For the event, ATO Tokyo developed a unified concept for the U.S. pavilion called “Enjoy American Barbecue!” which highlighted a variety of U.S. products including beef and pork, natural cheeses, rice, potatoes, peanuts, Sunkist California citrus, New York cheese cake, Oregon mix berries, white sorghum and U.S.-made outdoor cooking ware. The trade showcase attracted over 4,100 buyers from Japanese HRI and retail sectors and U.S. product exhibitors reported total expected sales of over US\$500,000 within the next six months.

**American BBQ TV Filming Event:** Agricultural Trade Office (ATO) Tokyo and its contractor created the “American BBQ” page for the “Foodies” website to promote American cuisine and U.S. food ingredients to Japanese food bloggers. The website was also able to recruit three bloggers and their families who participated in the “Enjoy American BBQ” filming event that took place on August 27 where they were able to experience American BBQ using U.S. products including beef and pork, Alaskan cod and king crab, chicken, lemons, papayas, sauce, spice, beer, wine, and many other ingredients and drinks. After the event, the participant bloggers created original recipes to feature on the Foodies website. Three versions of the video have been created and will air as three-minute episodes on Foodies TV over a three month period (50 times in total) from early October to late December. The recipes and videos will also be uploaded on the Contractor’s website and myfood.jp.

**ATO Osaka participated in American Day 2014:** On September Agricultural Trade Office (ATO) Osaka took part in “Discover U.S.A.!! American Day 2014” organized by the U.S. Consulate General, Osaka-Kobe in central Osaka. The annual event, aimed at promoting studying and tourism in the United States, as well as American products including food, has been a great opportunity for ATO to meet with local people who are interested in or who do business with the United States.

This year, the ATO worked with the California Prune Board and California Table Grapes to promote their products by highlighting recipes which used prune puree and stewed prunes. Emceed by the popular Akiko “DJ Chris” Kashiwagi, the event introduced ATO-Osaka and its activities to the audience as well as delicious and popular ways to enjoy California table grapes and prunes.

Tom, the jelly bean mascot of the U.S. Embassy social media program and Friendship Ambassador (shown in the photo) also joined the members of the Consulate General to welcome more than 1,300 visitors.



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